

# GAME FACE

INDIANS SCORE MAGAZINE

FIELD GENERAL  
**Einar Diaz**

June 2002 GameFace \$3.00



Photo: Gregory Drezdson



# Home of Baseball's Best Fans



## Welcome to Jacobs Field!

The 2002 Major League Baseball season is sure to be both exciting and challenging as we continue to engineer the transition of our ballclub while remaining competitive. We have high hopes of defending our American League Central Division title and returning to post-season play for the seventh time in the past eight years.



Under the guidance of General Manager Mark Shapiro, our transition is based on a planned strategy. Building a team, rather than a collection of individuals – with an emphasis on character, chemistry, and playing strong fundamental baseball – is at the center of our strategic plan.

Your enjoyment of Indians baseball is our main objective – whether you're sitting in the stands at Jacobs Field, listening on the radio, watching on television, accessing game and player information on our website, or reading the newspaper. We look forward to providing you the very best in sports entertainment.

On behalf of the players and our entire front office staff, we thank you for your remarkable support. Together, as partners, we will continue the excitement and success of Indians Baseball in Cleveland.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'LD' or 'Larry Dolan'.

Larry Dolan  
President and Chief Executive Officer







# BEATING



by Steve Herrick

## Long Odds

Photo: Gregory Drezdson



The fact that Riske was in Cleveland by 1999 – only three years after he was drafted – shows a lot about his ability and approach to the game.

**Indians Assistant General  
Manager Neal Huntington**

"I signed a letter of intent with Texas Tech," he said. "That was my plan if I didn't sign (with the Indians)."



Since joining the Indians bullpen, Riske hasn't pitched like a 56th-round pick. In fact,

"Sometimes where you're drafted doesn't mean a hill of beans," said Indians manager



★ ★

Charlie Manuel. "If you have talent, you can make it. I've seen high draft picks not make it at all. I don't care where someone is drafted. I look at a player's ability. That's what matters to me."

And ability is something Riske has shown a lot of.

"I like what David has shown," said Manuel. "He has a good arm and he goes after hitters."

"In the first couple of years, a player's draft status does matter," said Huntington. "There's a little bit more pressure to come in and do well. When you get to the second or third year, it doesn't."

Making it to the big leagues isn't easy for a 56th-round pick, but Riske then went through more tough times. After making 12 appearances with the Indians in 1999, he went into the 2000 season with a legitimate chance of making the team before misfortune struck.

Soon after he started throwing at the Indians Spring Training complex in Winter Haven, FL, his back began bothering him.

"I tried to rehab it," Riske said. "I came back from that, but it was still bothering me."

Riske went on the disabled list with the hope some rest would improve the problem. He made two appearances at Class AAA Buffalo before the pain returned.

"I had to have surgery," he said. "It's something that popped up. My dad had surgery four or five times on his back. Maybe it was a hereditary thing."

Indians team physician Dr. Louis Keppler performed surgery on Riske on May 5, 2000. He returned in late August and was sent to Class AA Akron for a rehab assignment. After joining Class AAA Buffalo for the International League playoffs, another problem developed in September when he came down with a sore shoulder.

"I came back pretty fast and then it started bothering me," Riske said. Another trip to the operating room followed. Dr. Lewis Yocum

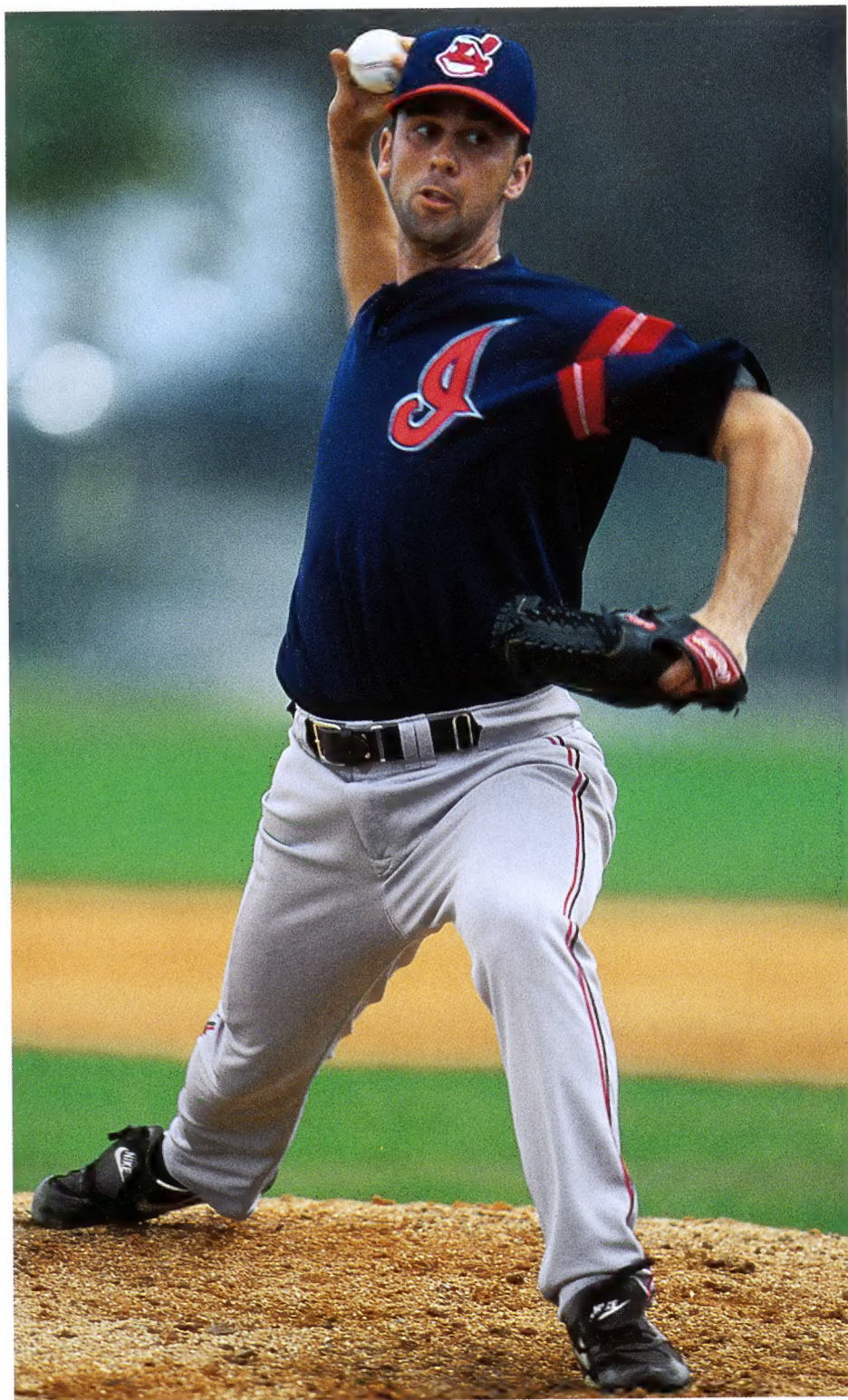
performed the shoulder surgery for a torn labrum in Los Angeles on September 14. Riske spent the winter months rehabbing from his second operation in five months.

"I was busy the whole off-season," he said. "I was worried about the organization thinking I got hurt too much, but I knew I could come back."

"When a player has two significant surgeries in the same year it does cause some re-

flection, but David made a 100 percent recovery from both," said Huntington.

Riske started the 2001 season at Buffalo. The Indians called him up on June 23. He pitched 2-2/3 hitless innings against the New York Yankees on June 25 before being sent back to Buffalo the following day. Riske was called up again on July 23 and spent the rest of the season with the Indians. The righthander pitched well as the Indians closed in on the



*Riske enjoyed a healthier Spring Training this year than he experienced in 2000.*

*While rehabbing after two surgeries (which he underwent in May and September of 2000), Riske feared his injuries would lower his "stock" in the eyes of the Indians; but, he has made a 100 percent recovery, according to Tribe Assistant GM Neal Huntington.*

*Now, Riske is a "big part of our bullpen" says fellow reliever Paul Shuey.*

Photo: Gregory Drezdson



American League Central title. A season highlight for Riske came during a game at Oakland (August 22). The Tribe took a 5-4 lead in the top of the 11th, but the A's loaded the bases with nobody out in the bottom of the inning. Riske worked out of the jam and ended the game by striking out Carlos Hernandez for his first career save.

"That was a good confidence booster," he said. "That helps you get confidence. If you get through something like that, there should be no doubt you can do it anytime."

In 26 appearances with the Indians, Riske was 2-0 with a 1.98 ERA. He allowed earned runs in only five of his 26 appearances and

had an 8-2/3 scoreless innings streak from August 4-15. Riske limited opposing hitters to a .206 average (20-for-97) and hitters batted .161 (5-for-31) with runners in scoring position.

Riske also pitched well during the Division Series against Seattle, throwing 3-2/3 scoreless innings with five strikeouts. Pitching against Seattle provided a touch of irony for Riske, who grew up rooting for the Mariners. He

*"Tunnel vision" – From the Indians bullpen at Jacobs Field, Riske calmly prepares to step into a pressure-packed game.*



Photo: Gregory Drezdson

picked up his first Major League win at Safeco Field on August 22, 1999 by pitching 1-2/3 scoreless innings.

"I'll always remember that," he said. "I had a lot of family and friends in the stands." In fact, Riske himself was in the stands for the games in Seattle during the memorable 1995 American League Championship Series between the Indians and Mariners. While Tribe fans celebrated their first World Series appearance since 1948, Riske took a different approach.

"I was disappointed," he said. "I was a huge Mariners fan growing up." Of course, Riske's allegiances have changed. He got fed up listening to family and friends talk about the Mariners last season as they charged to a 116-46 record.

"Last year I was so sick of people talking about the Mariners," he said. "I couldn't care less about the Mariners. My mom (Debbie) was always a big Mariners fan, but she's changed. A lot of my family still root for the Mariners, though."

Riske credits his mother for being the biggest influence in his career. "My mom was always there for me," he said. "She always supported me."

Debbie Riske still lives in the Seattle area and watches all of the Indians games on a satellite dish.

"She gets real nervous (when her son pitches)," he said. "If I do bad she calls me right away to get me in a better mood. We talk every day."

Riske's first Major League appearance, which came on August 14, 1999, was another memorable moment.

"It was against Baltimore here," he said. "The score was 7-1. I came in to throw the ninth inning. Mike Bordick popped up to second, B.J. Surhoff flied out to left, and I struck out Albert Belle."

Riske got a quick introduction to how Cleveland fans feel about Belle after the strikeout. "The crowd loved it," he said. "They were going crazy."

Riske also will always remember getting the word he was being called up to the Majors. That came on August 9, 1999 – five days before his debut. "It was a dream come true," he said. "They told me about 12 at night. Jeff Datz (currently the Indians bench coach) was our manager and he's the one who told me I was going to the big leagues."

Riske saved 70 games in five Minor League seasons, including 34 in 1998. He saved 33 games at Class A Kinston, which led the Caro-





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Jacobs Field photo: Gregory Drezdzon



# Reversal of Fortune

by Bill Needle



Photo: Gregory Drezdon



This probably won't be the first time you've been told how weird baseball can be; about how a baseball career can have as many surprise twists as a Hitchcock movie. By now, when it comes to baseball, you probably know that *you never know*. The story of Einar Diaz is just another chapter in the ongoing saga of baseball's irony – which seems to be equal to the irony of life.

Consider this: Diaz was designated for assignment by the Indians at the end of Spring Training in 1998. "Designated For Assignment" is organized baseball's version of purgatory – a 10-day period where a player can be traded, released, or – if he clears waivers – optioned to the Minor Leagues.

At the end of Diaz's 10-day "purgatory," he cleared waivers. Not a single organization in baseball deemed him valuable enough to claim. Choosing to stay in the Indians system, Diaz was optioned to Cleveland's Triple-A club in Buffalo in April. Now, friends, comes the irony.

By October, Einar Diaz was the Indians starting catcher in Game Five of the ALCS against the Yankees at Jacobs Field. Go figure.

"I thought that if I just kept working hard and playing hard, something good would happen," Diaz remembers. "I knew the Indians and they knew me. Sandy Alomar was the number one catcher and Pat Borders was the backup. I thought I'd just go to Buffalo, work hard, and if the Indians couldn't use me, maybe another team might notice me."

More irony. Something good did happen. Diaz, who had never hit .300 in any of his seven previous professional seasons, hit a career-best .313 at Buffalo, good for eighth in the International League and best among IL catchers. He threw out almost 40 percent of the runners who tried to steal against him and hit a team-best .382 with runners in scoring position.

On August 31, 1998, the Indians purchased the contract of the Minor League catcher who was designated for assignment five months earlier. Einar Diaz was in the big leagues to stay.

"That's the way Einar has been his whole life," says his brother Lino, a former Minor League player, coach, and manager, who is now in his first season as the Tribe's

Coordinator of Cultural Development. "Einar learned good work habits in our home growing up, and he's always believed hard work will pay off."

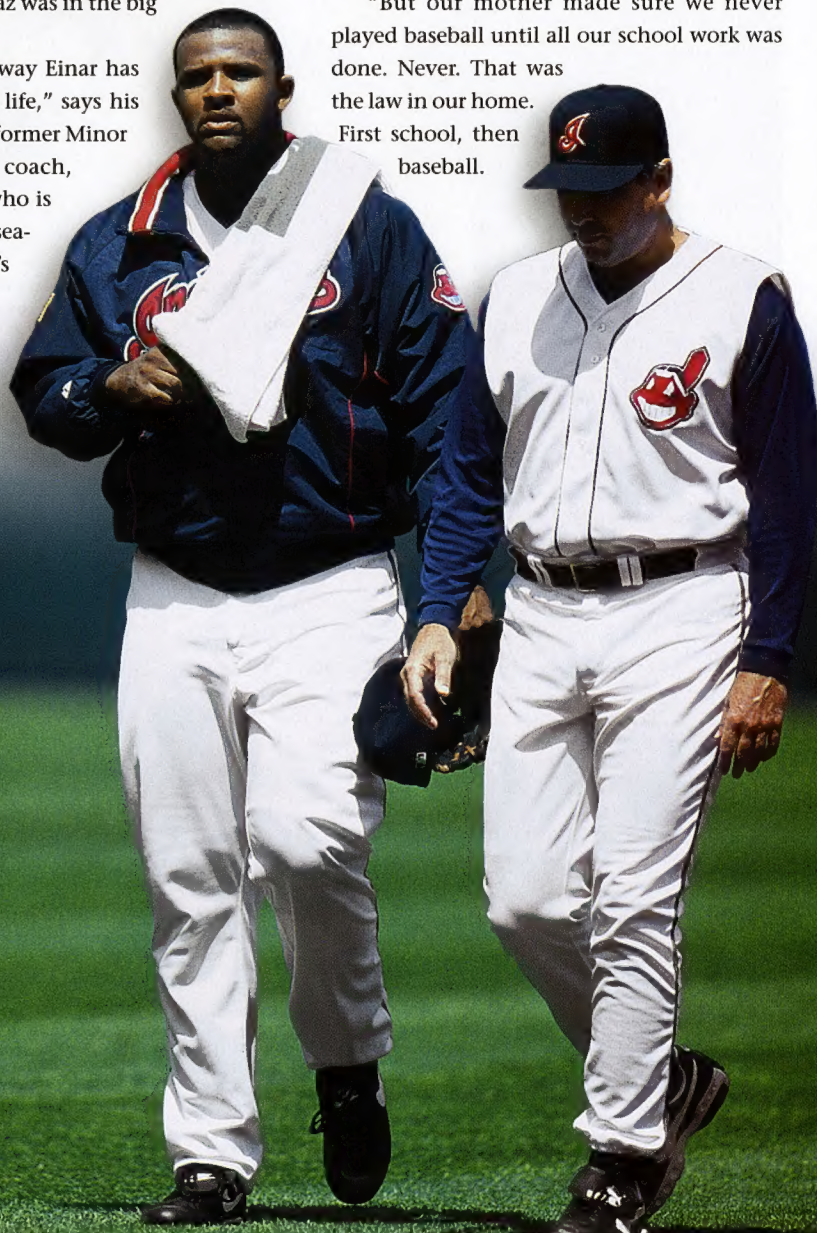
The Diaz brothers acquired their work ethic as the sons of a steel worker and stay-at-home mother in Chiriqui, Panama. Baseball was encouraged, but never at the expense of household duties or, especially, school work.

"My mother, that's who was the best teacher for us about working hard," Einar says. "My father, he was a hard worker at his job, too. But our mother (Diaz laughs), she was the one who made sure we knew what was important."

"Einar was a very good student in school," Lino says. "An excellent student. And I'm not surprised he's made it as a big league ballplayer because he was a good player when he was young."

"But our mother made sure we never played baseball until all our school work was done. Never. That was the law in our home.

First school, then baseball.





Einar was signed as an infielder by the Indians in October, 1990 at the age of 19. Perhaps his excellence in the classrooms of his native Panama explains the speed at which he has adjusted to, first, a new position and, more recently, the role as the Tribe's number one catcher.

After batting practice ends at 5:30PM, one can usually find Diaz, pitching coach Mike Brown, and the evening's starting pitcher at a table, poring over numerous sheets of data involving opponents' likes, dislikes, and tendencies. It's up to Diaz to remember the information.

**"It wasn't a difficult choice to become a catcher when they told me I was being shifted . . . They told me becoming a catcher would be the fastest way to get to the Major Leagues. So I said, 'I'll take the change.' "**

"When you're a backup, you learn from the bench, by watching or asking when you have a question. But when you're the number one catcher, you have to know all the right things because winning a game can depend on how you do your job as the catcher."

It certainly would have been easier for Diaz to remain an infielder; see the ball, hit the ball, catch the ball. When one is a third baseman, as Diaz was in his first two professional seasons, there's no need to know what pitch would be best against Alex Rodriguez with a 2-and-2 count and runners on second and third in a tie game. But had Diaz remained a third baseman, there's a chance he might never have made the climb from the Dominican Summer League in 1991 to Jacobs Field.

Diaz was an excellent third baseman. Even today, after nine full seasons behind the plate, all one need do is watch Diaz field grounders at third base during batting practice – with his catcher’s mitt – to get an idea of how well he played infield. It wasn’t a question about his glove that led the Indians to ask Diaz about changing positions. It was a question about his bat.

"No doubt, Einar was a good fielder. And he had a great arm," says Indians General Manager Mark Shapiro, who served as the Tribe's Assistant Director of Minor League Operations during Diaz's first years in the organization. "But he was a line drive hitter, a contact hitter. We had questions as to whether he would be able to hit with enough power to play a corner infield position, positions where – traditionally – you like to have a power hitter.

"You just don't see many guys make it to the Major Leagues because they are good defensive third baseman."

So much for Diaz's errorless season in the Dominican Summer League in 1991. So much for his league-leading fielding average for third



**Photo: Gregory Drezdzon**



basemen in Burlington in 1992. When Diaz reported to the Burlington Indians in 1993, he was a catcher.

"It wasn't a difficult choice to become a catcher when they told me I was being shifted," Diaz says. "I wasn't upset, no. They told me becoming a catcher would be the fastest way to get to the Major Leagues. So I said, 'I'll take the change.' Now look what has happened."

The change from third base to catcher required more than learning a new position. "It was hard the first two years, learning to play with a mask and shin guards and helmet on," Diaz says. "And in the Minor Leagues it's not like here in the Majors. You have to carry and pack your own equipment. Every day, I was forgetting some part of my catcher's stuff – the helmet, or one day the mask, or the shin guards. But I learned."

In addition to his intelligence and work habits, Diaz's physical and mental toughness have also contributed to his ascent to the position of Cleveland's number one catcher. Hit by 16 pitches at-bat in 2001, Diaz's total was one shy of the Indians club record.

"He might smile a lot, but he's a tough guy," says Charlie Manuel. "He plays hurt. He plays with pain. If I ask him if he's hurting, he always says no, he can play. He smiles, but you never question his toughness."

"That's one of the other big differences being the number one catcher compared to being the backup," Diaz says, "always being sore."

"When you're the backup, you only get hit with foul balls once or twice a week. When you catch every day, it's like you never get a chance to get better. That's one thing I notice. But that's just part of the job and I like playing every day."

"You have to be tough to be a catcher and I think I am."

When Shapiro and the rest of the then-Indians farm leadership thought Diaz's powerful arm might make him a good catcher, they couldn't have been more accurate with their projection. He has been at, or near, the top of catcher's throwing statistics at every level at which he's played.

In 2001, his first season as the Indians full-time starting catcher, Diaz led all American League catchers in throwing efficiency, nailing more than 35 percent of all runners trying to steal. After a rocky start, in which he retired just six of the first 29 would-be thieves, Diaz threw out almost 40 percent of the next 100 who attempted stolen bases. For his career, entering 2002, Diaz has thrown out roughly 35 percent of all runners attempting to steal. By comparison, Diaz's predecessor,



Photo: Gregory Drezdson

Nearly always upbeat, Diaz, according to his teammates, will rarely be found – on or off the field – without his trademark smile and positive attitude.



Sandy Alomar, Jr., has a career throw-out percentage of 275. Texas' Ivan Rodriguez, regarded as the standard against whom all Major League catchers are measured, has a career rate of over 50 percent.

"When Einar got here, he wasn't really sure of himself as a catcher," said reliever Paul Shuey. "He had a great arm, but he was just fair defensively. Now, he's one of the best defensive catchers I've ever had behind the plate."

Physical toughness. Mental toughness. Work ethic. Intelligence. Of course, Major League skills at the plate and behind it, as well. But the spice in the recipe that has brought success to Einar Diaz is his boundless enthusiasm, energy, and love for the game.

"If you watch Einar catch a game, you'd swear there was only one ball for that game," said Gordie MacKenzie, his manager at Class A Kinston in 1995. "If that one ball ever got away, there'd be no more game. So he's always

running to get it. He never walks around.

"I mean he's on the go all the time and he does it from Game One until the season is over. I just don't know how he does it. Every night, every day, it's the same way."

While Diaz may be blessed with an abundance of energy, he has also learned what hustle can bring to a player or a game.

**"Sometimes, if they know you hustle  
all the time, you can make  
them drop the ball or  
make a bad throw."**

### **Tribe Catcher Einar Diaz**

"You see things from other people's mistakes," he says when asked about his perpetual hustle. "First, you see what can happen in a game when you hustle, or you don't hustle. A guy can drop a ball, and if you hustle, you'll

be safe. Sometimes, if they know you hustle all the time, you can make them drop the ball or make a bad throw.

"And you can also see what happens to guys who don't hustle. They usually don't get too far. They might have the talent, but they don't hustle all the time. I don't want to be like them."

As for love of the game, just ask those who are around Diaz on a daily basis. "I believe the only – and I mean only – time I have not seen a smile on Einar Diaz's face was that game a few years ago when Pedro Martinez was throwing at him," says Indians Broadcaster Tom Hamilton. "Call him affable, or cordial, or whatever. Einar always seems like he's in a good mood."

And why not? The one-time designated-for-assignment castoff signed a long-term contract with the Indians last March that will keep him with the Indians through the end of the 2004 season, with a club option on his services for 2005.

Financial security has arrived for Einar, his wife Leslie, and their children.

Some players find that security takes an edge off the attitude that brought them that same security. Not the case with Diaz.

"I didn't even think about money when I signed the contract," he says. "That's not what's important to me."

"What's important is that I play as hard as I always have. I don't want to be one of those guys who they say changed because he got a long contract. I love to play baseball and I'm going to play the way I always have."

When one looks at what Einar Diaz has achieved since signing with the Indians as an undrafted free agent more than a decade ago, one realizes there's no sure thing in baseball. Number one picks have fizzled and free agents who've changed positions build careers and reputations that stand the test of time.

It would be interesting to measure the reactions around organized baseball when it comes to the story of Einar Diaz clearing waivers just four years ago, going unclaimed by the rest of the teams in the Major Leagues.

Certainly, there would be a huge sigh of frustration when the other 29 organizations remember they might have acquired Diaz for a small investment.

And there'd also be a huge sigh of relief from the Indians when they remember how close they might have come to losing him.

Imagine what life would be like for the Indians – or Diaz – if things had gone differently.

In baseball, you just never know.



Photo: Gregory Drezdson



*Look Alike*





# Analytic

# Pitcher

**By Chuck Murr**



Photo: Gregory Drezdson



Paul Shuey believes in going by the book. So it was natural for the reliever to be the Indians spokesperson for the FirstEnergy Grand Slam Summer Literacy program last year.

"My wife Julie probably was more involved and did more with it than I did," Shuey explained. "My role was going to a school and reading stories to kids. It was fun."

Shuey has always found reading fun and recommends it to all youngsters.

"As a kid I used to go to the library and come home with 30 books in a shopping bag. I'd read them all. I loved to read. There's one autobiography series I really remember. I think I read every single one of those."

Shuey said the knowledge he acquired through that series served

him many years later in school – as he would be able to recall details about the lives of the famous people he'd read about.

"I read about all the presidents, too, and a lot of *Hardy Boys* stuff. My favorite book [as a youngster] and one I recommend to kids is *My Side of the Mountain*. Travis Fryman and I were just talking about that the other day. He said it was his favorite, too. It is outstanding. It's about a kid who has problems with his home life and runs off to the woods. He had learned some stuff from his grandpa about living in the woods, then he just goes on his way and does kind of cause-and-effect management. He tries things – and learns. These berries make me sick, these berries are good.

"It's like that here in the Majors, when a young guy gets called up."

Shuey said that while players work hard and receive so

much coaching, most baseball careers really are based upon trial and error.

"I can sit here and tell a Jerrod Riggan how to throw to a team or an individual batter and it really doesn't do any good until he actually gets out there and throws his fastball and either gets the guy out or doesn't get him out," said Shuey.

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**"I weigh a lot less, about 210 or 215 as opposed to 225 or 230 back when I was breaking in. I had to kind of rework everything in order to just try and stay healthy. I feel so much better because of it."**

**Indians Reliever Paul Shuey**

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"It's how it happens for him and how he receives the information and what he does with it. It doesn't matter if I tell him, 'don't throw that guy fastballs away.' He could throw Rafael Palmeiro fastballs away and get him out every time because Raffy doesn't see the ball well out of his hand. I could throw Raffy 10 out of 10 to the same spot and he kills it because he *does* see it out of my hand. That's one of the hard things about this game. You have to live it yourself."

Shuey has applied that approach to his own game, completely changing his diet, his preparation, and his throwing motion since the Indians made him their first-round draft pick in 1992 out of the University of North Carolina.

"I weigh a lot less, about 210 or 215 as opposed to 225 or 230 back when I was breaking in," he said. "I had to kind of rework everything in order to just try and stay healthy. I feel so much better because of it."

"My dad helped me a lot. He is very analytical. We always break things down together and try and figure out what's the best way of getting something accomplished. We changed my diet. I eat healthier foods. One of the biggest things was to stop drinking beer. It can really dehydrate you, so I drink a lot of water now. It wasn't difficult. Whenever you're doing something that you think is better and



Photo: Gregory Drezdson



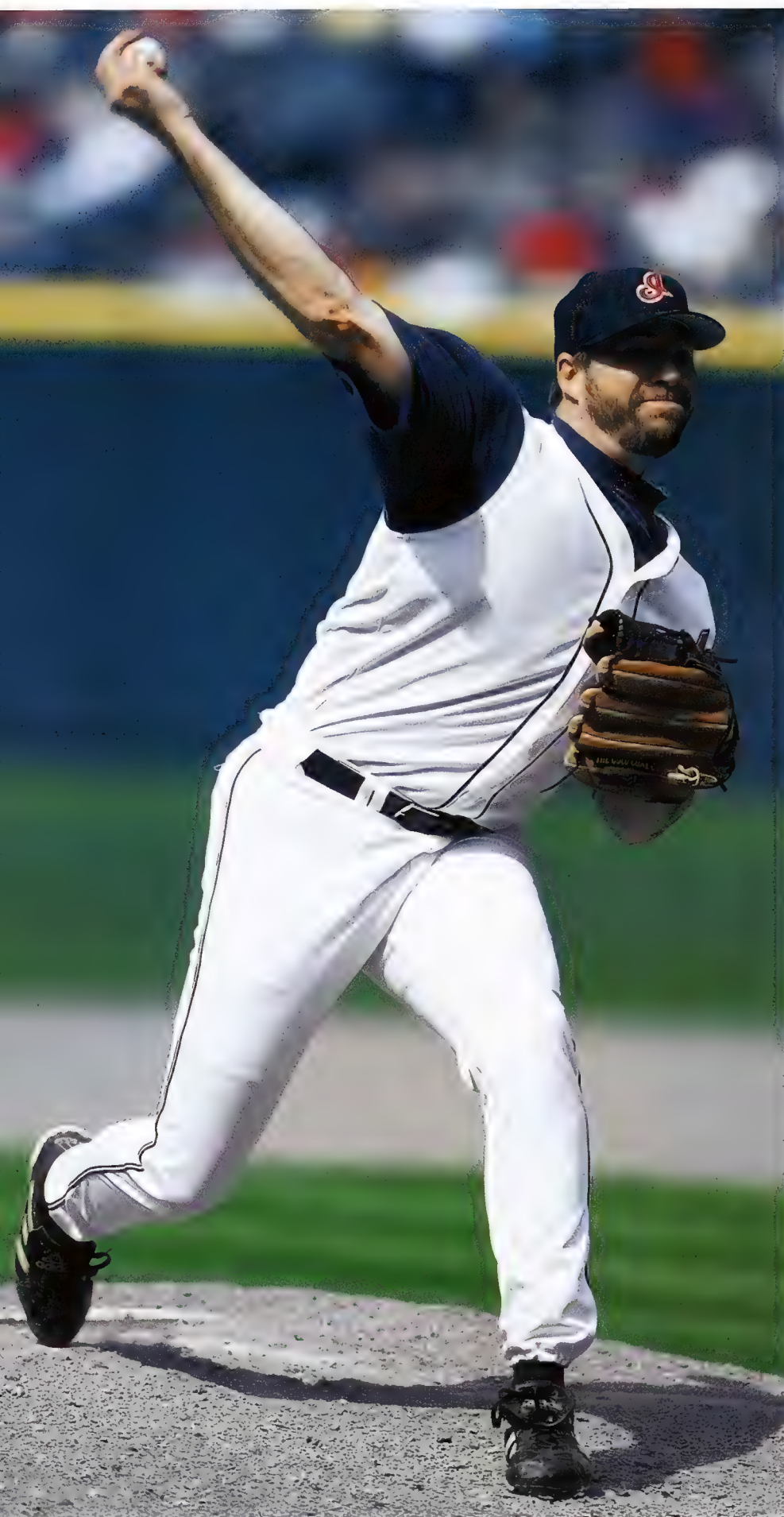


Photo: Gregory Drezdson

believe in it, it makes it that much easier to stay in that routine."

A tougher change was altering his throwing motion. Shuey emulated his idol, former Reds reliever Rob Dibble, while going 18-4 with 18 saves in college, striking out 220 and allowing only 117 hits in 172 innings.

"I loved to watch Dibble and Nolan Ryan," he said. "If they were on TV, I wasn't going to budge. I watched their every move. Those two threw about as hard as a body will let you. That was for me."

But what worked in college and the Minors did not help when Shuey first joined the Indians in 1994.

"When I came to the big leagues I had a real big leg kick," he recalled of his first 14 games, in which he went 5-for-5 in save opportunities, yet had an 8.49 ERA and more

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**"When I came to the big leagues I had a real big leg kick. I had to get rid of that because guys were running on me. I had to make major adjustments there.**

**The idea was to adjust without hurting myself ... Once I did, I had good results immediately."**

**Indians Reliever Paul Shuey**

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walks than innings pitched. "I had to get rid of that because guys were running on me. I had to make major adjustments there.

"The idea was to adjust without hurting myself and also not lose any 'stuff.' I really couldn't do it without losing some stuff, but got it so it was minimal. Once I did, I had good results immediately.

"Again, my dad helped. We spent an entire off-season working on it all. It was a lot of videotape work to see how we could get power out of the motion. A lot of it was just moving my left leg across my right leg, sort of coiling and getting more velocity. I had been going straight up with the windup, and the hardest I could throw was 92 mph.



Shuey, 31, does not throw as hard these days, but has better command. With experience, he knows immediately whether he has his best stuff – and what to do when he doesn't.

## Indians Reliever Paul Shuey

Shuey has always worked hard to keep his legs in shape, but his all-out style puts a great deal of torque and stress on his lower body.



Shuey enjoys staying as active as possible while finding time for relaxation through his favorite activities – which include fishing, hunting, and reading.



lina League. The other save came at Akron and he won the *Bob Feller Award* as the Tribe's *Minor League Pitcher of the Year*.

Returning to the closer's role is something Riske would like to do someday. He saved 18 games between Akron and Buffalo in 1999 and 15 last season at Buffalo. For now he's content with being a setup man.

"There's a little bit of difference," he said. "As a setup man, you go into the games with different leads. You might come in behind a run or two. As a closer, the game is on the line and you have a one or two-run lead. I approach it the same way no matter when I enter the game."

Pitching in close games is something Riske enjoys. "I like the type of player who's aggressive," he said. "I like to have the closer mentality. I like guys who have no fear at all."

No matter what role he's in, Riske knows there's one important variable. "The key is staying mentally tough after a bad outing," he said. "The best thing is to be out there the very next day and put it behind you."

"David has a tremendous quiet confidence," said Huntington. "He's not arrogant, brash, or flashy. He thinks he can get people out, and then he goes out and does it."

At 6-foot-2 and 180 pounds, Riske isn't an imposing figure on the mound, but looks can

be deceiving. In baseball lingo, he's known as someone who's "sneaky fast," which means Riske gets the ball to the plate quicker than batters anticipate. That explains why he struck out 65 batters in his first 56-2/3 Major League innings.

"That's what hitters say," said Riske, who throws between 90 and 94 miles-per-hour. "They tell me the ball goes through the zone and rises, but I have no idea what I do. I just throw it."

"He's deceptive," Indians pitching coach Mike Brown said. "Hitters don't pick up the ball. I guess they would say that the ball comes out of his shirt. He also has a lot of life on his pitches. The ball seems to take off."

"He throws his fastball and guys don't see it very well," said Indians reliever Paul Shuey. "I wish I could do that. David's a big part of our bullpen."

Manuel has the confidence to use Riske – even though he's only 25 years old – with the game on the line. "I can trust him," said Manuel. "He has good composure and keeps his poise."

"What's always impressed me about David is his maturity and poise," said Huntington. "He's always had a calming presence on the mound."

Riske also throws a split-finger fastball and a breaking ball. The splitter has developed into a key pitch.

"Last season I started throwing it more," he said. "I really started throwing it more in Spring Training. It's been a good pitch for me."

"If he develops that pitch, he has a chance to be a very good closer," said Huntington.

Riske's best friend on the team is left-hander C.C. Sabathia. The two met in 2000 while they were at Akron. "We clicked," said Riske. "We've been getting along ever since."

"We were both young guys and we hung out together," said Sabathia. "We've been tight ever since."

Despite his long odds of making the Majors and an injury-plagued season, Riske has never let up. "I never, ever thought about giving up," he said. "I love the sport. I love the competition. I'll never give up. They'll have to kick me out. I want to play until I'm 40."

Considering the obstacles Riske, who turns 26 in October, already has overcome, nothing he accomplishes would be a surprise.

"The biggest thing is staying positive," he said. "I'm real competitive. I hate failing at anything."

Riske hasn't experienced much in the way of failure since joining the Indians, and there's a good chance that trend will continue.



Photo: Gregory Drezdson







# Johnny

By Jim Ingraham

Anyone who was there and saw it still remembers it, still talks about it.

"It's the first and only time I've ever seen a player make a curtain call for his defense," said Indians general manager Mark Shapiro.

"It was amazing," said Indians third base coach Joel Skinner.

"I've got a video of it," said John McDonald. "It was pretty wild."

It was the summer of 1998. McDonald was playing shortstop for the Akron Aeros, the Indians Class AA farm team. On this day Akron was hosting the New Britain Rock Cats, an affiliate of the Minnesota Twins.

"Doug Mientkiewicz hit a ball back through the mound," McDonald recalls. "Willie Martinez was our pitcher. The ball went right through his legs. I managed to make a diving stop of it on the outfield grass, I jumped up and did a 360-degree turn and threw Mientkiewicz out at first.

"The next batter was Chad Allen, and on the very next pitch Allen did the exact same thing. He hit another one right through Martinez' legs. The ball went to the exact same spot as the other one, and I did the exact same thing: dove, caught it, jumped up, spun around, and threw to first base. It was a bang-

bang play, and I think the umpire might have gotten a little caught up in the excitement, because he called Allen out, too."

That was the third out of the inning, and as McDonald ran off the field, the Akron crowd rose to its feet and cheered. The cheers continued as McDonald reached the dugout. He went into the dugout, and the cheering got louder. The crowd wouldn't stop cheering.

"I tipped my cap when I came off the field, but they wouldn't stop cheering," said McDonald. "I was in the dugout for a while, and one of our coaches pushed me out, and I waved to the crowd again."



Photo: Gregory Drezdson



McDonald grew up in New London, CT, about equal distance between Boston and New York City. "We lived about two hours from Fenway Park and two hours from Yankee Stadium," said McDonald. "But I was a Yankee fan growing up. I was a fan when the Yankees weren't winning anything – the Don Mattingly days."

McDonald was obsessed with baseball growing up, but because of the northern climate, that wasn't his only sport. "Because it's so cold up there, you only got to play about 20 games in high school," he said. "So you needed to play other sports to stay in shape." McDonald's other sport was basketball, and he was just as good in basketball as he was in baseball – maybe better.

"In baseball, when you're only playing 20 games it's hard to tell how good anyone is," he said. "But in basketball I was pretty good."

McDonald attended East Lyme High School, where he played baseball and basketball. He was All-State in baseball in his senior year in high school in 1992, much to his surprise. "I don't know how I made All-State," he said. "I wasn't even the best player on our team. I played good defense, but I was by no means our go-to guy."

Professional scouts apparently agreed with McDonald's self-evaluation. He wasn't drafted coming out of East Lyme High School, so he went to junior college: the University of Connecticut at Avery Point, and was named the New England Junior College Player of the Year and a second team All-American in 1994.

"No four-year college wanted me," said McDonald. "After my second year in junior college, Providence and the University of Connecticut both contacted me. I eventually chose Providence, because it was a smaller school, and I didn't want to be going to a school where you had 200 other kids in your classes."

McDonald played two years for Providence and was named to the All-Big East second team both years. He was eligible for Major League Baseball's June Draft after his first year at Providence – but, again, went undrafted.

"That was a little disappointing, because my roommate was a really good player, and he would get calls from Major League teams all the time telling him they were interested in him," said McDonald.

"And a couple of the teams said to him, 'Tell your roommate that we are thinking of drafting him, too.' I really thought I had a chance at getting drafted that year." But it didn't happen. So McDonald played his senior year at Providence, and when it ended after a

loss in the Big East tournament, McDonald didn't know what to think.

"I remember after that last game, sitting in the locker room thinking I might have just played my last baseball game ever," he said. By then McDonald knew he had a chance to be drafted. At Providence he had been favorably compared to Lou Merloni, an infielder in the Red Sox organization, who was a star at Providence prior to McDonald, and was the measuring stick for all subsequent infielders at that school.

**"But it's the slow rollers  
hit to you that you have  
to make the plays on, because  
those are balls that the pitcher  
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and did not allow the  
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need to be outs."**

#### **Tribe Infielder John McDonald**

"When they said you were as good as Lou Merloni, that was always great praise," said McDonald. The day of the 1996 June Draft, McDonald nervously sat by the phone. "In the 12th round," he said, "a scout from Cleveland called me and said, 'John, congratulations. We just drafted you in the 12th round, I'll be back in touch with you later,' and he hung up. The whole thing took about 20 seconds. I called my parents and said, 'I think I just got drafted by Cleveland, but I'd like more than a 20-second phone call for confirmation. For all I knew it was one of my buddies messing with me.'"

The Cleveland scout called again that night, and, in a much longer conversation, convinced McDonald that he had in fact been drafted by the Indians. The next day the scout showed up at McDonald's house for what was probably one of the easiest negotiations in club history.

"He asked if he could come over, and when he did he brought a box with a pair of spikes, a glove, and an Indians jacket," said McDonald. "It only took about 20 minutes for me to sign. There really weren't any negotiations that went on. I told myself I wasn't going to let the scout leave without signing me."

McDonald thus began his journey through the Indians Minor League system, and quickly established a reputation as a jaw-dropping defensive wizard at shortstop.

Skinner was McDonald's manager in 1997 at Class A Kinston, and was immediately impressed.

"John's a lot like Omar in that he has real good balance," said Skinner. "He's not a big rangy, gliding type of fielder. He's more of an along-the-ground guy. He makes all the plays, and is exactly the kind of player you're looking for in a guy who can impact the game defensively."

McDonald said he learned a lot in playing for Skinner at Kinston, Akron, and Buffalo.

"The thing I learned from Joel was the importance of making all the routine plays," said McDonald. "Joel always preached on how important it was to be consistent defensively. If you make all the routine plays, the great plays will take care of themselves. But it's the slow rollers hit to you that you have to make the plays on, because those are balls that the pitcher has made a good pitch on, and did not allow the hitter to hit it hard. Those need to be outs."



Photo: Gregory Drezdzon



McDonald's education continued when he started attending the Indians Major League training camp, and also on those occasions when he was called up to Cleveland during the season. That gave him a chance to learn at the side of the master, the nine-time Gold Glove winning Vizquel.

"Omar has helped me a lot," said McDonald. "He'll tell me where to hold my hands in relationship to my feet. We'll take grounders together, and sometimes he'll tell me that my feet and hands aren't working together the way they should be, and then tell me why."

Most players of McDonald's defensive abilities would be frustrated about being stuck behind one of the few shortstops in the Majors who can relegate McDonald to a backup role. However, McDonald says he doesn't mind waiting his turn.

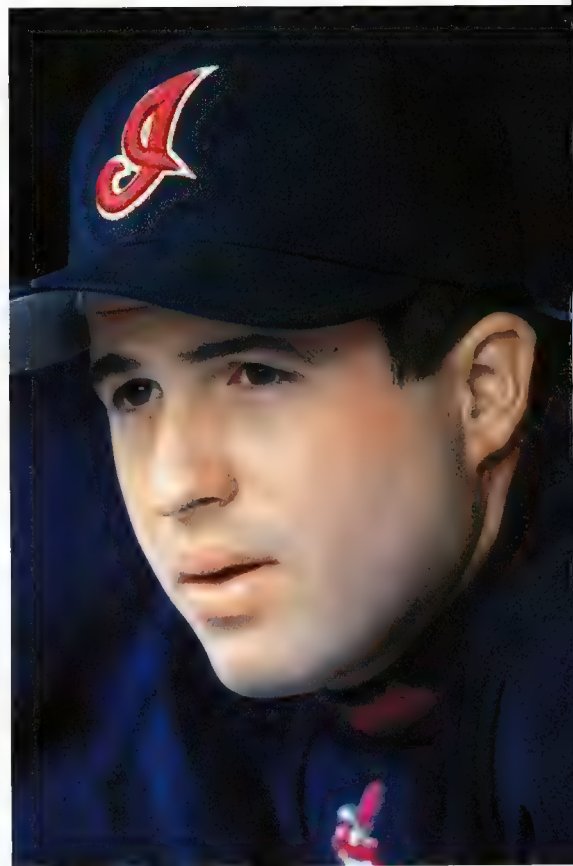
"I want to play more than anything, but it's not frustrating being behind Omar," he said. "I know who is in front of me, and I've learned a lot from him. The way I look at it, when I do get my chance to play, I'm going to be as well prepared as anyone ever has to play shortstop."

**"I want to play more than anything, but it's not frustrating being behind Omar. I know who is in front of me, and I've learned a lot from him."**

### **Tribe Infielder John McDonald**

Although he plays behind, and greatly respects, Vizquel, McDonald said the one shortstop he idolized as a kid was Hall-of-Famer Ozzie Smith. "I would wait all week to watch *This Week In Baseball* for the defensive plays of the week, and I would always hope they were all infield plays, so I could watch Ozzie," said McDonald.

In an era of runaway offensive numbers, and a bigger emphasis on home runs and hitting than ever before, sometimes defense gets lost in the equation. But McDonald says he doesn't feel that those who excel in the art of



*McDonald has taken advantage of playing behind Gold Glover Omar Vizquel. Rather than bemoan his lack of playing time, McDonald has dedicated himself to learning from "The Master."*

catching and throwing the ball are taken for granted.

"I don't think that defense gets overlooked," he said. "It's just that offense gets looked at so much. But if a guy can't catch the ball, no matter how much he hits, how much is he really helping his team?"

"The object of the game is to win. The owners want to win, the fans want to win, the players want to win. If you have a guy who hits .300 but costs you 15 runs a year because he can't make the plays in the field, he's not really helping his team win. Every team needs a couple of defensive guys."

Not that McDonald is ALL defense. He has had his moments offensively, especially at Yankee Stadium, the stadium he visited so often as a kid. Ironically, McDonald has three official at-bats at Yankee Stadium during his career, and he has gotten hits in all three of those at-bats.

"I've got the highest career batting average at Yankee Stadium of any player with at least three at-bats," he says proudly.

And they still love him in Akron.



All photos: Gregory Drezdron



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- Type of event
- Date of event
- Appearance time
- Location of appearance

Slippin' n Slidin' Around Town Year-Round



Photo: Gregory Drezdowski



*Cleveland Indians Charities (CIC), the charitable arm of the Cleveland Indians, was established in 1989 to make a positive contribution to the quality of life for Northeast Ohio youth by providing educational and recreational opportunities. It is the intent of CIC's staff that the contributions made to partner organizations will energize thousands of kids to face today's challenges with courage and responsibility.*

# Putting the "Fun" in "Fund-Raiser"

## Events Support Youth Recreation and Education Programs

Since 1989, CIC has donated \$3.875 million to youth-oriented agencies and organizations of Northeast Ohio. CIC has established relationships with several local organizations that focus on youth education

The monies donated by CIC have been raised through a variety of activities, including the Online Auction, Celebrity Golf Classic, First Pitch Luncheon, Jacobs Field Tours, Pepsi Corporate Hitting Challenge, and numerous other special events throughout the season.

In addition, a significant major portion of the total was raised through the generosity of Cleveland Indians players, coaches, front office, and corporate partners.

Based on fund-raising activities, CIC made the following donations to area charities in 2001: For the seventh straight year, CIC donated \$100,000 to the Cleveland Municipal School District's Athletic Department. The \$100,000 donation will help defray the cost of high school baseball and softball programs. CIC also made significant donations to the following organizations in 2001: Boys & Girls Clubs of Cleveland (\$100,000); The United Black Fund of Greater Cleveland (\$60,000) for the operation of the Larry Doby RBI (Reviving Baseball in Inner Cities) Program; Cleveland Baseball Federation (\$50,000); and the City of Cleveland Division of Recreation (\$45,000) for operation of the Rookie League Youth Baseball Program and a girls softball program.

The Cleveland Indians organization and its players have a unique opportunity to make a positive impact on the youth of Northeast Ohio. It is an opportunity and responsibility we embrace.

If you would like information on any of the programs offered through Cleveland Indians Charities, please call 216.420.4400.

## 2002 CIC Events

### Online Auction

April-December – Don't miss your chance to own a piece of the 2001 American League Central Division Champion Cleveland Indians! Visit [indians.com](http://indians.com) and click on the AUCTION link to bid on a variety of unique and one-of-a-kind Indians and baseball memorabilia includ-



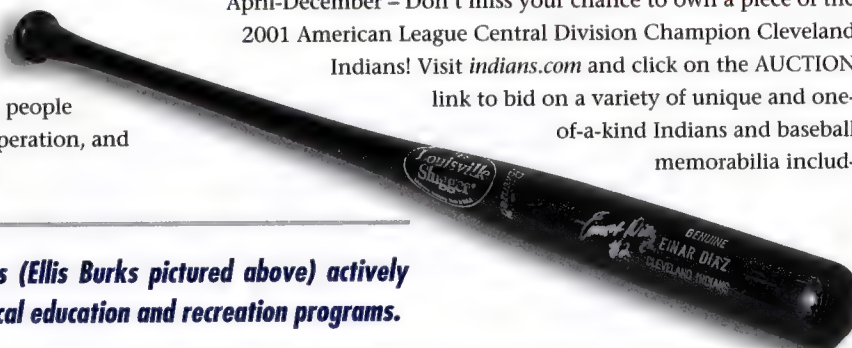
Photo: Gregory Drezdron

and youth recreation. The following organizations benefit from a continued partnership with CIC:

- Cleveland Municipal School District's baseball and softball programs
- Boys & Girls Clubs of Cleveland
- Cleveland Baseball Federation
- The United Black Fund Larry Doby Reviving Baseball in Inner Cities Program
- City of Cleveland Division of Recreation Rookie League Program
- Cleveland State University minority athletic scholarship
- North American Indian Cultural Center

The relationships CIC maintains with these Northeast Ohio youth-service agencies provides the opportunity to jointly create, design, and execute programs and activities. The result is programming which helps young people develop necessary life skills, learn responsibility and cooperation, and develop courage and confidence to face today's hurdles.

*The Cleveland Indians ownership, staff, and players (Ellis Burks pictured above) actively support local youth by contributing to a variety of local education and recreation programs.*





ing autographed baseballs, jerseys, bats, and other collectible Tribe items. New auction items are added weekly. The 2001 Online Auction generated more than \$42,000 for CIC.

## Jacobs Field Tours

Experience the excitement of Cleveland's crown jewel with a behind-the-scenes tour of one of baseball's greatest ballparks. Tours are available May through September, Monday through Saturday, plus Sundays in June, July, and August when the team is on the road. Tickets are \$6.50 for adults and \$4.50 for youths 14 and under and senior citizens. A group rate and time are also available. Tickets are available at the Jacobs Field Box Office, all Indians Team Shops, through *indians.com*, by phone at 1.866.48TRIBE, and by automated kiosk at all Northern Ohio OfficeMax stores. Tour includes a visit to: the Bullpen, Club Lounge, Press Box, Dugout, Party Suite, and Batting Cages (*tour route subject to change*). On select dates, the tour will also make a stop in the Visitors Clubhouse. With support from **OfficeMax**, a special school tour program is also available in April, May, and September. Teachers will receive *Team Teacher*, a specially created booklet of baseball-related activities and curriculum, and an Indians Media Guide for use in their classroom. All tour guests will receive a special commemorative gift. Call 216.420.4385 for more information on public, group, or school tours.

## First Pitch Luncheon

The 2002 season opened with a "welcome home" luncheon, April 9, at the Cleveland Convention Center. The entire Indians roster was on hand to help fans celebrate the start of another exciting season of Tribe baseball.



## Shirt Off His Back

Take home your favorite Indians player's jersey – right off his back! During one game each homestand, Tribe fans can purchase raffle tickets to win an autographed, game-worn jersey from an Indians player. Winners will be escorted to the field after the game to receive the jersey from the player. Raffle tickets will be sold at various locations around Jacobs Field. Cost is \$5.00 for two raffle tickets. Call 216.420.4400 for specific players and game date information.

## Pepsi Corporate Hitting Challenge

Assemble your power-hitting team and prepare to swing for the fences in the 7th annual corporate event. This single-elimination tournament pits Cleveland area businesses against each other. The first round begins in May and winds up in September. All rounds are held at Jacobs Field, with warm-ups in the batting cages. Call 216.420.4389 for a brochure or to register your team of nine players.



## Garage Sale

**Saturday, June 29** – This summer, don't miss the best garage sale on the block! Cleveland Indians Charities will hold its first-ever Garage Sale at Gateway Plaza, between Jacobs Field and Gund Arena! The event will feature game-worn jerseys, caps, and batting helmets; used bats; street-pole banners; ballpark signage; and other Indians items you won't find anywhere else. Don't miss this baseball collector's dream sale!

## Annual Celebrity Golf Classic

Photo: Gregory Drezdron



**Thursday, July 25** – Hit the links with your favorite Tribe players for the 11th annual Celebrity Golf Classic at Quail Hollow Resort and Country Club. Teams will be paired with Indians players, coaches, broadcasters, and local sports celebrities. Call 216.420.4400 for a brochure or to register.

## The Music Returns in 2002



**Saturday, August 24** – The celebrity concert of the summer is back! Enjoy a night filled with music and surprises as several Tribesmen perform with well-known rock-n-roll stars! The fourth annual event is fun for music and baseball fans of all ages. Call 216.420.4400 for the lineup of stars and ticket prices.





# Jacobs Field Ground Rules

Baseball's most important pitch this season won't come from a mound. In an effort to combat drinking and driving, Major League Baseball, together with the Techniques for Effective Alcohol Management (TEAM) coalition, continues to make a comprehensive appeal to fans this year. The message: *PLEASE DON'T DRINK AND DRIVE!*

As part of the TEAM program, each Major League club reviews its alcohol policies and runs public service announcements asking fans to drink responsibly and warns them against the consequences of drinking and driving.

The Cleveland Indians want you safe, because we want you back. Please drink responsibly.

In an effort to make everyone's visit to the Ballpark as safe and enjoyable as possible, a list of guidelines has been developed.

The Indians ask that you follow these guidelines, or be subject to ejection from the Ballpark, and in some cases, subject to criminal prosecution by the Cleveland Police Department.

To ensure that each game is a pleasant experience for each and every guest, the Indians have established the following "Ground Rules:"

## ● MLB Universal Code of Conduct

The Cleveland Indians are committed to creating a safe and enjoyable ballpark experience. Our staff will proactively intervene to support an environment where:

- ❑ Obscene or indecent clothing will not detract from the guest experience.
- ❑ Guests will enjoy the baseball experience free from foul abusive language or obscene gestures.
- ❑ Guests will refrain from displays of affection not appropriate in a public family setting.
- ❑ Intervention with an impaired or intoxicated guest will be handled in a prompt and safe manner.
- ❑ Guests will show their ticket when requested and sit only in their ticketed seat.
- ❑ The progress of the game will not be disrupted by guest actions or unauthorized access to the playing field.
- ❑ All camera and equipment bags are subject to inspection.
- ❑ Per MLB requirements, fans may not bring coolers, backpacks, or lunch bags into any ballpark. Small bags (i.e. - purses) will be inspected before they are permitted into the ballpark.
- ❑ For the safety and comfort of all of our fans, umbrellas are not permitted in the ballpark.
- Jacobs Field is a non-smoking facility with designated smoking areas. Non-smoking areas include: the entire seating bowl of the Ballpark (including the outdoor seating of Suites and Club Seats); KidsLand; Club Lounge; and all public rest rooms. Smoking is permitted in the following areas: Ford Picnic Pavilion; Miller Lite Patio area on the Main Concourse; all three concourse levels (Main, Mezzanine, and Upper Deck) on the East Ninth Street side of the Ballpark and Upper Deck pavilion area on the Carnegie side of the Ballpark (all of these locations are open-air areas with picnic

**"It is our intention to make our home a safe, comfortable, family-oriented facility so every trip to Jacobs Field is most enjoyable."**

## Dennis Lehman, Indians Executive Vice President of Business

tables, concession stands, and rest room facilities nearby); Bleacher Concourse on the Eagle Avenue side of the Ballpark. In addition, the Terrace Club has both smoking and non-smoking areas. Jacobs Field has signage identifying designated smoking areas for your convenience.

- Cans, glass bottles, plastic beverage containers, thermos bottles, and squeeze bottles are not permitted into Jacobs Field.
- Food items and juice boxes are permitted inside the Ballpark, provided they are not inside a cooler or container.
- Pets are not allowed inside the Ballpark. However, working dogs for persons with disabilities are permitted.
- The resale (scalping) of Indians tickets is strictly prohibited and subject to prosecution by the Cleveland Police Department.
- For the consideration of all of our fans, please refrain from entering and exiting the seating bowl while game action is occurring.
- Cameras and video recorders are permitted. However, any resale of the photography or video is strictly prohibited. Team name, logos, and players' likenesses are all copyrighted material.
- Persons observed breaking the law (eg. using illegal drugs, or drinking alcohol underage) will be subject to immediate ejection and/or criminal prosecution.
- Persons entering the playing field, throwing or attempting to throw objects onto the field, will be subject to immediate ejection from Jacobs Field and/or criminal prosecution.

If you have any questions, comments, suggestions, or problems, please visit one of the Guest Service Centers located at Section 121 of the Main Concourse and in Section 519 of the Upper Concourse, or see one of our hosts throughout the Ballpark. The Indians thank you for your cooperation.



Photo: Gregory Drezdson

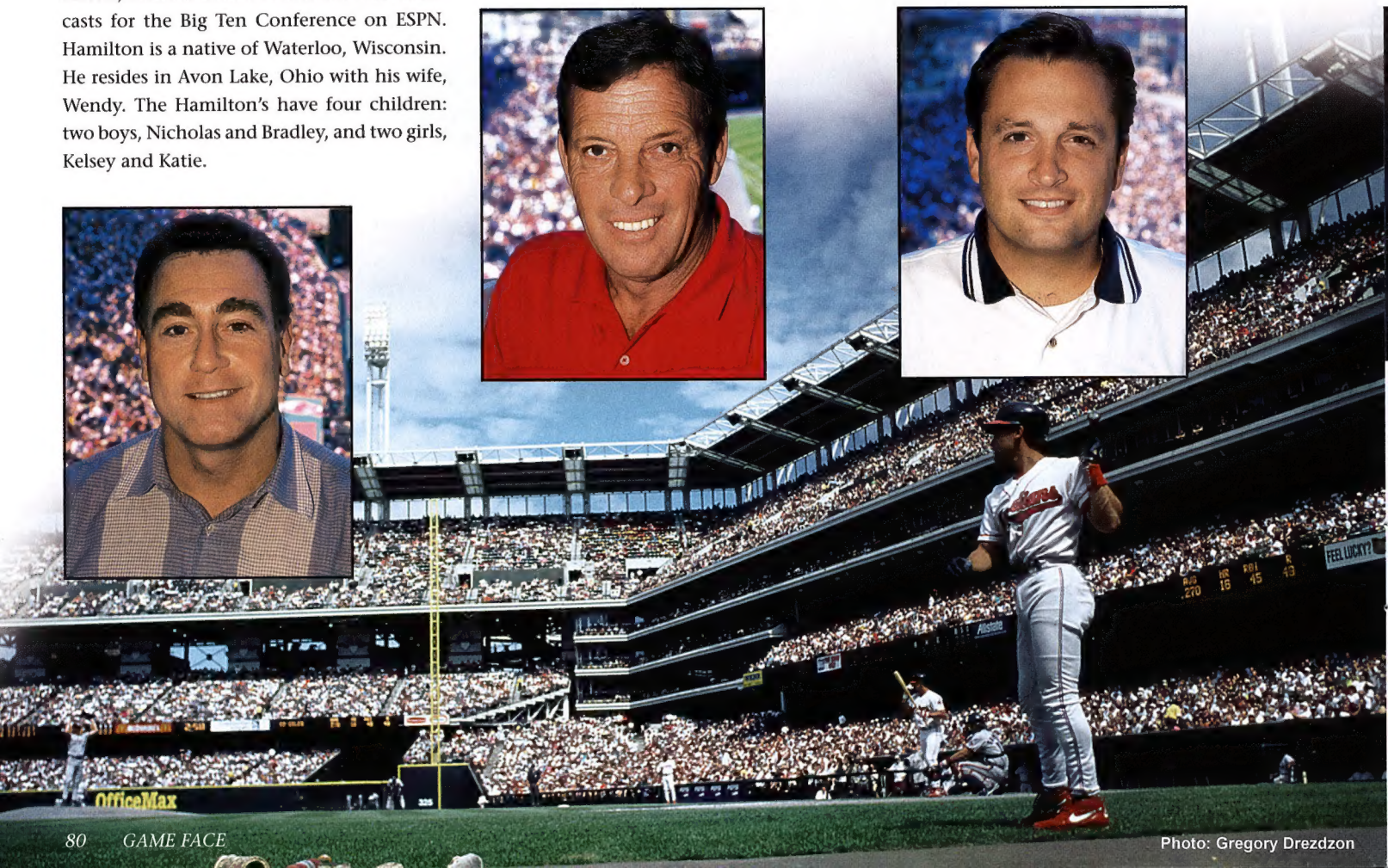
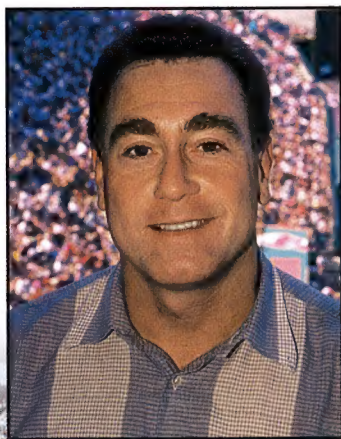


# Cleveland Indians Broadcasters

Tom Hamilton, the "Voice of the Indians," is now in his 13th season of calling Cleveland Indians baseball games on radio. In his 12 seasons since 1990, Hamilton has called 57 post-season games for the Tribe from 1994-99 and 2001 including all six games from the 1995 World Series and all seven games from the 1997 World Series. Hamilton will be teamed in the booth with Mike Hegan and Matt Underwood to provide commentary for all 162 regular-season games and 20 Spring Training contests on NEWSRADIO WTAM 1100 AM and on the Indians Radio Network. Tom came to the Indians after spending three seasons as a broadcaster for the AAA Columbus Clippers, the top farm club of the New York Yankees. Previously, he worked in Milwaukee, Appleton, Watertown, and Shell Lake, Wisconsin. Some of Tom's broadcasting credits include the University of Wisconsin football games, University of Colorado basketball games, the Appleton Foxes Minor League baseball games, and work for ABC Radio. He is a three-time recipient of the Ohio Sportscaster of the Year Award (1997, 2000, and 2001). During the off-season, Tom does television basketball broadcasts for the Big Ten Conference on ESPN. Hamilton is a native of Waterloo, Wisconsin. He resides in Avon Lake, Ohio with his wife, Wendy. The Hamilton's have four children: two boys, Nicholas and Bradley, and two girls, Kelsey and Katie.

Mike Hegan is in his 14th season as a Tribe broadcaster. He is teaming up with Tom Hamilton and Matt Underwood for a fifth straight year in the Indians radio booth and is in his debut season with FOX Sports Net – joining John Sanders and Rick Manning in the television booth on a rotational basis. Mike handles both play-by-play and color analysis with WTAM and FOX Sports Net. He spent the past 13 seasons providing color analysis for Tribe games on WUAB-TV43. Prior to joining the Indians in 1989, he spent 12 seasons as a television announcer for the Milwaukee Brewers. Mike played 12 years in the Major Leagues (1964-77) with the New York Yankees, Seattle Pilots, Milwaukee Brewers, and the Oakland Athletics. The former first basemen-outfielder represented Seattle in the 1969 All-Star Game and played on the 1972 World Championship Oakland Athletics team. Mike is the son of former Indians catcher, Jim Hegan, who played with the Tribe for 14 seasons. Mike and his wife, Nancy, reside in Hilton Head, SC. They have two sons, Shawn and J.J., and two grandchildren.

Matt Underwood is in his third season as a member of the Tribe radio broadcast team. He has spent seven seasons, from 1994-2001, as host of *Indians Warm-up*, the pregame show heard on the Cleveland Indians Radio Network. He has also hosted the pregame show for Indians baseball on FOX Sports Net for the past five seasons. Matt spent the previous 12 years in various capacities with local ABC affiliate WEWS-TV5. He has continued that relationship in a part-time role since joining the Tribe radio broadcast team during the 2000 season. He served as the station's sports director from 1997-2000. In addition to anchoring the 6PM and 11PM sports, he also hosted the weekly half-hour show, *Sports Sunday*. Underwood co-hosted a daily talk show on SportsRadio WKNR (1993-94) and served as play-by-play voice for WVIZ's High School Football and Basketball *Game of the Week* from 1992-1998. The Ashland, OH native graduated from Baldwin-Wallace College in 1990. Matt currently resides in Avon Lake with his wife, Shelley. They have two children, Max and Devan.





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\*Team participants must be 12 years of age or older.

**Indians**



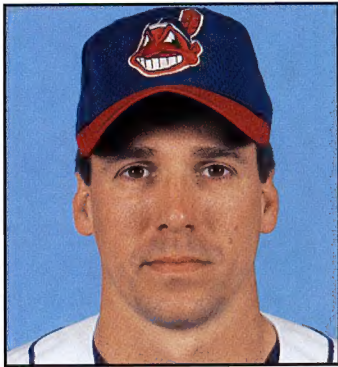
**United Way  
Services**  
[www.uws.org](http://www.uws.org)







# 2002 Cleveland Indians\*



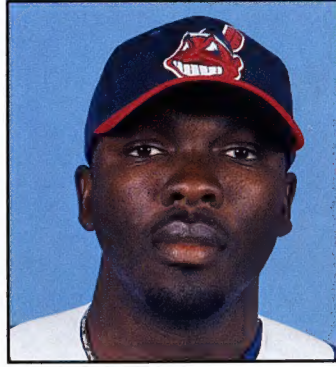
**TRAVIS FRYMAN** 17

Age: 33, born March 25, 1969  
in Lexington, KY  
Position: Third Base  
B-T: R-R Ht: 6'1" Wt: 205



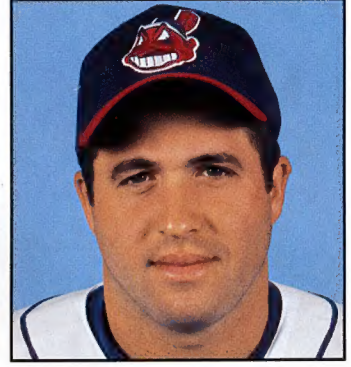
**RICKY GUTIERREZ** 12

Age: 32, born May 23, 1970  
in Miami, FL  
Position: Infielder  
B-T: R-R Ht: 6'1" Wt: 195



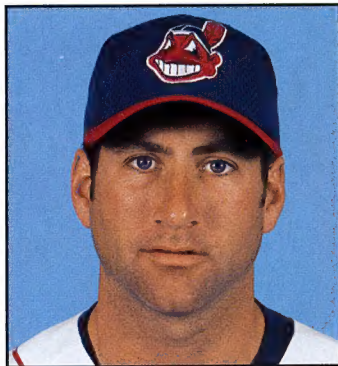
**MATT LAWTON** 11

Age: 30, born November 3, 1971  
in Gulfport, MS  
Position: Outfielder  
B-T: L-R Ht: 5'10" Wt: 190



**JOHN McDONALD** 8

Age: 27, born September 24, 1974  
in New London, CT  
Position: Infielder  
B-T: R-R Ht: 5'11" Wt: 175

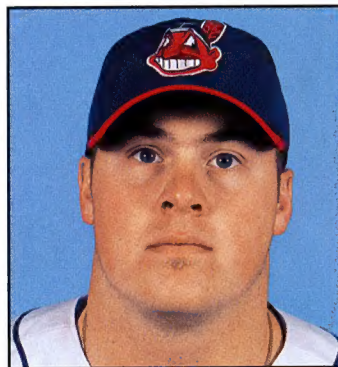


**CHARLES NAGY** 41

Age: 35, born May 5, 1967  
in Fairfield, CT  
Position: Pitcher  
B-T: L-R Ht: 6'3" Wt: 200

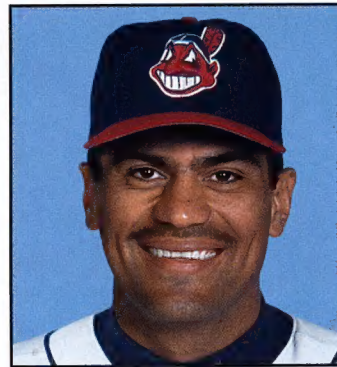


Photo: Gregory Drezdson



**CHAD PARONTO** 34

Age: 26, born July 28, 1975  
in Woodsville, NH  
Position: Pitcher  
B-T: R-R Ht: 6'5" Wt: 255



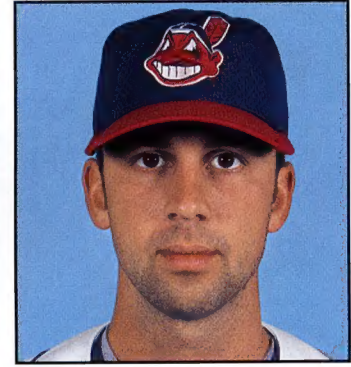
**EDDIE PEREZ** 38

Age: 34, born May 4, 1968  
in Ciudad Ojeda, Venezuela  
Position: Catcher  
B-T: R-R Ht: 6'1" Wt: 185



**RICARDO RINCON** 73

Age: 32, born April 13, 1970  
in Veracruz, Mexico  
Position: Pitcher  
B-T: L-L Ht: 5'9" Wt: 190



**DAVID RISKE** 54

Age: 25, born October 23, 1976  
in Renton, WA  
Position: Pitcher  
B-T: R-R Ht: 6'2" Wt: 180